





# Truancy

Presented by Deputy District  
Attorney Julia Alloggiamento

# THE ISSUE

## Truancy Leads To:

### ■ School issues

- Poor grades, suspension, expulsion, drop out

### ■ Limited Job Opportunities and Less Pay

- High school dropouts earn \$290,000 less than high school graduates over their working lives
  - California Dropout Research Center (2007)

### ■ More Reliance on Government Help

- More than two thirds of dropouts use food stamps during their lifetime.
- High School Graduates are 68% less likely to be on welfare.
  - Source: California Dropout Research Center 'the Economic Losses from High School Dropouts in California.'

# THE ISSUE (cont'd)

- Truancy Leads to: Health Issues
  - Dropouts have a higher risk of stroke, heart disease and diabetes, depression and other serious conditions.
  - California spends \$3.5 billion in health care costs for each school years dropouts.

CDRP the California Dropout Research Center. "The Economic Losses of High School Dropouts in California.

# THE ISSUE (cont'd)

## Truancy Leads to More Criminal Behavior

- 20 times more likely to commit violent crimes
- 11 times more like to commit serious property crime
- 12 times more likely to have commit drug related offenses

CDRP- The Economic Losses from High School Dropouts in California

- Truancy is a gateway to gangs



# THE ISSUE (cont'd)

82% of America's Prisoners are high school dropouts.

- U.S Department of Education, National Center for education Statistics, Drop Out Rates in the United States: 1998
- National Dropout and Prevention Center and Network (<http://www.dropoutprevention.org>)

•California loses 2.5 billion dollars a year in crime related costs as a result of drop outs.

- CDRP the Economic Losses from High school Dropouts in California.

# How to Address the Issue

- Prevention
- Intervention
- Suppression
- Communication

# The Law

## Compulsory Attendance Law:

Each person between the ages of 6 and 18 years **SHALL** attend school full time.

- Cal. Education Code Section 48200
- Truancy Defined: A “truant” is a student who has 3 or more unexcused absences
- Cal. Education Code Section 48260.
- Habitually truant: A student who has 5 or more unexcused absences may be prosecuted.
- Cal. Education Code Section 48262.



# The Consequences (Suppression)

## ■ Consequences for Youth

- \$365 fine
- Up to 48 Hours Community Service
  - \*Litter pick up or graffiti abatement
- Loss or delay of license for 1 year

## ■ Consequences for Parents

- Infraction
  - Fines
  - Parenting classes
- Misdemeanor
  - Possible jail time
  - Current split in authority

# Successful Intervention & Prevention Programs

- Parent Project
  - Graduating parents reported increased attendance of children
  - Solicit parents at truancy mediations
  - Order parents at parent prosecutions
- Parent Project Jr.
  - Franklin-McKinley, Washington Elementary
- Law Related Education
  - Educates youth about responsibility, authority, and justice. Mentorship.

# Successful Intervention & Prevention Programs

- SJPd TABS
- San Jose funds six San Jose Best Agencies to provide school-based services and services through the TABS offices

# Successful Collaborations

- TAC (Truancy Abatement Collaborative)
  - Countywide collaborative of school district personnel
- JJSC (Juvenile Justice Systems Collaborative)
  - County Collaborative – recommendations to County
- DA & City collaboration on truancy consequences
  - PSW through anti-litter/anti-graffiti program
  - PSW through ESUHSD Saturday School program



# Increased Communication

- Increased communication between Courts, probation & schools
  - Partnership with Courts, probation, ESUHSD
  - Working with SJUSD & Franklin-McKinley
- Communication between DA, probation, Courts & Schools
  - Schools know consequences of process and can follow up at site
- Communication between TABS & Schools

# Next Steps

- Earlier Intervention & Prevention Needed
  - Focus on middle school
- Streamline process for more immediate consequences for youth
  - Resources needed
- Involve the Youth
  - Presentation at Youth Commission
    - Youth Campaign
    - Incentives/Recognition

# Questions?

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